

August 16, 2013

To the Honorable Members of the Illinois House of Representatives,
98th General Assembly:

I hereby return House Bill 2454 with specific recommendations for change.

Our democracy is always strongest when more people make their voices heard. As Governor, my job is to defend our democracy and always protect the right of citizens to express their concerns, put forth their ideas, and do what they can to improve their lives and their communities.

A portion of this bill is consistent with these efforts, as it requires townships to increase the notice period for public meetings from 10 days to 15 days. The bill also requires the agenda for the township's annual meeting to be adopted fifteen days in advance of the meeting. I commend the sponsors for advancing these provisions, which will give busy citizens a greater opportunity to attend and participate in township meetings.

However, this legislation simultaneously silences the voices of the citizens by limiting the topics which may be the subject of advisory referenda. By restricting the public policy issues which may be raised via referenda to those "directly related to the business of the township," this bill undercuts the democratic process. While the business of the township is no doubt important, other issues are of equal or greater importance to the citizens, such as health care and the minimum wage. Our citizens must be able to weigh in and address those issues as well.

Government belongs to the people. We must do all we can to ensure they have the opportunity to make their voices heard on these important issues.

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 2454, entitled "AN ACT concerning local government.", with the following specific recommendations for change:

On page 1, line 5, by replacing "Sections 30-10, 30-50, and 30-205" with "Sections 30-10 and 30-50"; and

On page 7 by deleting lines 1 through 10.

With these changes, House Bill 2454 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Pat Quinn
GOVERNOR